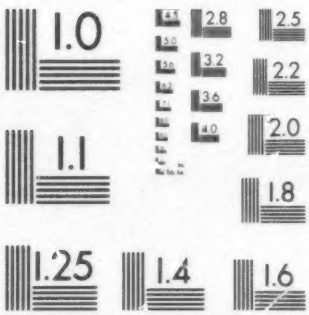

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 233 028 TM 830 366

AUTHOR Shultz, Jeffrey
TITLE Ethnography in Education: Implications for Teacher Education.
PUB DATE [83]
NOTE 41p.; For related document, see TM 830 367.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Critical Reading; Educational Anthropology; Educational Cooperation; *Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; *Ethnography; Interaction; Research Methodology; Teacher Administrator Relationship; *Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS *Participant Observation

ABSTRACT

Articles that are concerned with ethnographic studies of schooling and learning in order to discuss the contribution of ethnographic inquiry to teacher education are reviewed. The first section of the paper divides the literature on the ethnography of schooling and learning into three types: (1) articles that address theoretical and methodological concerns related to doing ethnography in educational settings; (2) studies of interactions among participants in educational settings; and (3) studies about the relationship and collaboration between researchers and educational practitioners. The second section of the paper contains reflections on the contributions this literature can make to the training of teachers in two specific areas: (1) development of skills in critical analysis that will allow teachers to interpret, critique, and digest what others are saying and writing; and (2) development of observation skills that will allow teachers to find out for themselves what is happening in their own classrooms. Ethnographic descriptions of life in classrooms, with their detailed accounts of the lives, actions, thought, and perception of persons involved in educational settings, can be used as case materials to help teachers and potential teachers think in more differentiated ways about what happens in educational settings. (LC)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Jeffrey Shultz

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED233028

Ethnography in Education: Implications for Teacher Education

Jeffrey Shultz

University of Cincinnati

TM 830 366

During the past two years, a number of collections of articles both in books and journals, have appeared which are concerned with ethnographic studies of schooling and learning. (Several of these are Green and Wallat, 1981a, Besag, 1981, Gilmore and Glatthorn, 1982, Spindler, 1982, and Wolcott, 1982. However, this is not an exhaustive list.) These collections cover a range of topics, from theoretical and methodological concerns to issues related to the collaboration between researchers and teachers. In this paper, I would like to draw on this material for the purpose of discussing the contribution of ethnographic inquiry to teacher education. Although this interest has not been the thrust of the articles I have examined for this discussion, I believe that there are some clear implications in the literature for the use of ethnography in the education of teachers.

I shall begin by providing a synthesis of the primary areas covered by the literature on the ethnography of schooling and learning. I do this because much of the material appears in publications that are not generally read by teacher educators or teachers themselves. This inaccessibility may be due to either a lack of familiarity with the field of educational anthropology, its concepts, and its jargon, or to the belief that this literature has no direct application to the real world. Most of the assumptions and understandings of the educational and learning process with which teacher educators and teachers are conversant are derived from psychological perspectives of the ways in which the world operates. And perhaps educational anthropologists have failed to clarify the ways in which ethnographic endeavors can be used by practitioners in everyday life. Like

other aspects of educational failure, this may be attributable to an interactional collusion, where both parties are responsible for the lack of communication.

The second section of the paper contains some reflections on the contributions this literature can make to the training of teachers. At a time when traditional ways of educating teachers are being questioned and new standards for that process are being proposed and established (cf. Cremin, 1978, Smith, 1980 and Gideonse, 1982), it is important to reflect on what contributions educational anthropologists can make to this effort.

A Typology of the literature on the ethnography of schooling and learning

Over the past two years, the literature on the ethnography of schooling and learning can be divided into roughly three types: the first kind of article deals with theoretical and methodological concerns related to doing ethnography in educational settings. The second are reports of studies of some aspect of the interaction among participants in educational settings, both in and out of school. These may include teachers and students, children interacting with each other, or parents and their children. Finally, the last category deals with studies about the relationship and collaboration between researchers and educational practitioners, including teachers and principals.

It should be pointed out that many of the articles I surveyed covered more than one of the topics listed above. In addition, many, if not all of the articles reporting the results of studies of interaction also included a definition of ethnography and a rationale for

its use in educational settings. Interestingly, as a result of the readings, my students have often commented on the self-consciousness of researchers reporting about the ways in which the choice of ethnography over more traditional quantitative educational research methods was made. One does not find the same type of argument being proposed in studies in which quantitative methods are chosen over ethnographic ones. This self-consciousness, although not unexpected in an emerging field, appears defensive to those who already accept the legitimacy of ethnographic methods. As these methods become more generally accepted, accessible, and well regarded by others out of the field, the need for such self-conscious justification might diminish without relinquishing the reflexivity which can be a vital aspect of ethnographic description.

Reflection on method is a productive and necessary task. A number of articles to which I refer define ethnography and methods can be used in educational settings. (Spindler, 1982, Heath, 1982a, and Humes, 1982) Other articles have appeared that examine the ways in which anthropological theory and method can be used to study learning and the acquisition of culture. (See in particular all of the articles in Wolcott, 1982.) But I would like to keep articles that focus on discussions of theory and method separate from others that report the results of studies and simultaneously present definitions of ethnography and rationales for its use in educational research.

In what follows, each of the three types of articles will be discussed and representative examples of each will be presented. This review is not exhaustive, but rather is meant to represent an over-

view of the material that is available.

Discussions of Theory and Method

In any attempt to introduce a new way of doing research, it is necessary to provide definitions of concepts and rationales for its use. It is also necessary to provide some fairly detailed accounts of how the research should be carried out. In the past two years, as ethnographic research has been more widely used and accepted in educational research, many articles have appeared that deal specifically with these issues. In particular, the most comprehensive and detailed have been the work of Spindler (1982), Hymes (1982), Heath (1982a) and all of the articles in Walcott (1982).

In addition to providing some direction to those who would like to learn something about ethnography, some of these authors also raise concerns related to the misuse of the term "ethnography" and the dangers inherent in the application of those methods by those who have a limited understanding of the field in general and the ethnographic approach in particular. (Rist, 1980) There are fears that such widespread acceptance may be a short-lived fad, which if continued to be misapplied and misconstrued, might lead to its demise. (Spindler, 1982)

My own experience with this issue is that I have encountered students who are attracted to more naturalistic methods of doing research out of fear of numbers and mathematical calculations. There are also notions that doing this "softer" type of research is in some ways easier and less time consuming. In another vein, I have also heard a candidate for a job, in making a presentation to the faculty, say (my paraphrase): " I decided to do a little

ethnography, so I hung around the principal's office for a couple of days and eavesdropped on some converstaions."

There clearly are some misconceptions and abuses of the term "ethnography" and the methods that are usually associated with it (participant observation, in particular). But there is a danger inherent in trying to monitor too closely what constitutes "good" ethnography and in serving as a watchdog over what other researchers do. In trying to change the ways in which people look at the world, and in some very real ways that is what we are trying to do, we should expect to encounter some criticism and misunderstanding. By being too moralistic about what is "good" or not good, we may be limiting the interest of others and in fact, cutting off some potential researchers who are intimidated or offended by what may be construed as a self-righteous and elitist attitude. My feeling is that our place is to inform and educate, not intimidate and offend.

Another potential problem with this literature is that each author presents his or her own version of what ethnography is. This is not surprising, since there are probably as many definitions of what it is as there are theoreticians and researchers who think about, define, and use it. There are some common threads in these definitions including a concern for culture and holism, for including the viewpoint of participants, for grounding the hypotheses, questions, and analysis in the research process, and for making comparisons across time and across cultures and settings. However, there are those who focus on one or another of these issues, and others who include other aspects, such as the importance of ethnohistorical analysis (Heath, 1982a), as an overriding concern.

For an uninformed reader, this kind of diversity of opinion can have both positive and negative effects. The positive effects come from being confronted with what at first glance may appear to be conflicting information and then having to make some sense of it. In other words, this type of debate can be provocative and stimulating for those who are trying to find out what this thing, "ethnography" is all about. On the other hand, this type of diversity may lead uninitiated readers into thinking that there is something wrong with a field where even the most notable of its thinkers and practitioners can not decide what it is all about. It would be unfortunate if this turns out to be the result. However, even if it were possible, I would never suggest curtailing this debate, since it is from such diversity that growth and change occur. It is essential to the "self-consciousness" of the discipline.

I would like to stress one point here, that, while it is raised by some authors, is either not raised at all or only touched on by others. And that is that ethnography is not simply a method, or a technique, but rather a way of understanding and making sense of the world. (Geertz, 1973, Erikson, 1973, Gilmore and Smith, 1982, Hymes, 1982) In dealing with educational researchers whose conceptual framework, particularly as it relates to "science" and doing research is a positivist one, who believe in finding answers to carefully posed research questions, and who assume a causal and linear model in their explanations of social phenomena, we are presented with a problem that is more epistemological than it is operational. Ethnography, and the doing of it, assumes a much more complex universe, one in which answers are not necessarily obtainable and one in which relationships

are multidimentional and multifaceted.

Clifford Geertz states this position eloquently:

> Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is explication I am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical.
>
> (1973, p. 5)

> Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete is is. It is a strange science whose most telling assertions are its most tremulously based, in which to get somewhere with the matter at hand is to intensify the suspicion, both your own and that of others, that you are not quite getting it right. But that, along with plaguing subtle people with obtuse questions, is what being an ethnographer is like.
>
> (1973, p. 29)

From certain perspectives, the criticisms of ethnography as being "soft," or "unscientific" may not be unreasonable. There is no question the doing of ethnography can and should be systematic, rigorous, and comprehensive. But the world we are dealing with is complex, and we can merely come up with reductions of that reality, whether those reductions occur in numbers, graphs, tables, or prose. In dealing with issues of theory and method, we need to attend, especially when we are talking to others, to some of these epistemological issues as well as with more nitty-gritty ones having to do with particular procedures or techniques. Only then can we begin to make it clear that spending two days eavesdropping in someone's office may be research, it may be some form of naturalistic inquiry, but it is not ethnography as construed by anthropologists and others interested in attempting to understand a little about the mysteries of human life.

In this way, perhaps we can begin to show others that in ethnographic inquiry the emphasis should be on the latter half of the endeavor-inquiry - and the raising of questions about the way the world works. Then it becomes simultaneously a reflection on the assumptions we hold about the nature of that world and the ways with which we view it.

Studies of interaction in educational settings

The second type of article that has appeared and probably the most common, deals with reports of studies of patterns of interaction in schools and other settings. Within this group, there are three subcategories which may be distinguished: 1) studies of teacher-student interaction in classrooms and other school settings; 2) studies that compare patterns of interaction and language use in classrooms with those that occur in the homes and communities of the children; and 3) studies of children's culture, or the "hidden life of children." I will discuss each of these in turn.

I find the first category, studies of teacher-student interaction in classrooms and other school settings, to be the most problematical. In many cases, these articles report the results of studies that have attempted to understand why certain kinds of children fail in school. In the early and middle 1960's, this was also the focus of a great deal of educational research. Although the focus of this research has remained basically the same, the emphasis has shifted in the ways in which such failure is explained. The earlier explanations for failure, coming primarily from educational psychologists, placed the blame for such failure on the shoulders of the child, and if not the child, on his or her parents, home or community.

In the most recent work in educational anthropology in this area, the focus for blame has shifted from the students to the teacher. Now it is not the student's "cultural disadvantage" or "linguistic deprivation" that has brought about the failure, but rather the teacher's narrow minded notions of what is appropriate or inappropriate behavior in the classroom and his or her subsequent differential treatment of children based on these expectations. Rather than seeing the classroom as a complex web of interactions that are jointly produced and accomplished by both teacher and students in, as Ray McDermott would put it, collusion with each other, these researchers have borrowed a page from the educational psychologists and have looked for individuals to blame for the failures which occur in schools. (The argument I am presenting here is similar, although different in content, to that presented by McDermott and Hood, 1982.) Whether the focus is on reading (Hart, 1982), the apparent failure of integration in an elementary school (Hanna, 1982), or the ways in which teachers socialize students for different work roles (Wilcox, 1982a; see also the review by Wilcox, 1982b), the emphasis seems to be on the role played by teachers and other school personnel in bringing about this failure.

This is not to say that there is nothing wrong with schools, that some students are in fact not failing, or that we shouldn't study these issues and try to understand and ameliorate these types of situations. In fact, as Courtney Cazden (forthcoming) has pointed out, educational anthropologists may have an obligation to go "beyond the status quo". But, if, as it is implied in these studies, students are victims of unfortunate circumstances in which they are bound to

fail, then teachers too are caught up in this situation and they too are as much "victims" of their own backgrounds and professional training. Rather than placing the blame at the feet of one or another group, I believe we need to start asking the old ethnographic question "What is going on here?" in those classrooms and look for those things that are working as well as those that may not be working. In any case, whatever we do, we need to understand successes and failures from the point of view of both teachers and students and stop looking for scapegoats in attempting to come up with simple answers to very complex questions.

In a recent paper, David Smith expressed some of the same sentiments:

> Rather than simply focusing upon problems and then making suggestions as how they can be addressed, ethnographers find themselves strategically situated to discover what is working already, and then to provide support, explanation and legitimacy for these practices. (1981a, p. 50)

In order to accomplish these objectives, we need more studies of the everyday, commonplace life in schools and classrooms. (Erickson, 1982) We need to work in all kinds of classrooms, not just those that strike us as being "interesting" for one reason or another, either because they strike our political or philosophical fancy. (Smith, 1981b) We need to know more about what is and what can be, as opposed to what isn't and what can't be. And we need to make these readings accessible to the very teachers and "potential" teachers who are currently the focus of attention and for whom the reports of these studies can make a difference.

Not all studies of teacher-student interaction focus on failure.

Among the studies that look at this issue and describe the structure of everyday, commonplace activities, albeit using different approaches, are those of Mehan, 1982, Green and Wallat, 1981, and Florio, 1978. Although these descriptions of classroom life may seem dull by comparison with the more "exciting" descriptions of conflict on the classroom battleground, they provide insightful descriptions of ways in which teachers and students jointly manage to accomplish classroom tasks.

Another source of productive research in this area is that being done by Cole and McDermott and their colleagues on cognition in everyday life (McDermott and Hood, 1982, Laboratory of Comparative Cognition, 1982) and those being proposed by Erickson dealing with "taught cognitive learning". (Erickson, 1982) In some of these studies, the emphasis shifts from the "hidden" to the manifest levels of curriculum and learning.

In all of the research mentioned in the last two paragraphs, the emphasis is on what is happening in classrooms and other educational settings, both in the social domain as related to the allocation and taking of turns as well as in the cognitive domain as related to learning and the attribution of intellectual ability.[1] There is also a shift in ways of looking and understanding, away from an individualistic focus on teachers and students as being the cause of school failure, and towards an understanding of the complex ways in which participants in educational settings create and manipulate social and intellectual realities. (For a more detailed and comprehensive summary of this type of research, based primarily on unpublished reports to NIE, see Green, 1983.)

The second area under the category of reports of studies on interaction are articles about home-school differences in patterns of interaction. These accounts offer descriptions of patterns of interaction that exist in the child's world outside of school and the ways in which these patterns conflict with or at least are not congruent with the expectations for interaction that exist in the classroom. Included in this category are studies by Heath (1982b and 1982c) on patterns of questioning and uses of literacy at home and at school, Au (1980) on Hawaiian children's "talk-story" and its relationship to learning to read, Michaels (1981) on children's narrative styles and their relationship to the acquisition of literacy, Shultz, Florio and Erickson (1982) on home-school differences in conversational turn-taking, Erickson and Mohatt (1982) on issues related to interactional timing and rhythm, and Jacob (1982) on the behavior of Puerto Rican children at home and at school.

In all these studies, there is an assumption made that the notions of interacting and communicating that children bring with them to the classroom may not always be congruent with the teacher's expectations for appropriate behavior. If this is in fact the case, then a mismatch between students' conceptions of what constitutes appropriate behavior and teachers' expectations of and preference for certain kinds of student performances may lead to a misjudgment on the teachers' part of the child's academic and cognitive abilities and/or conflict between the two groups in their interactions in the classroom. Whether the implications are far reaching, as in the case of a misjudgment of ability, or more immediate, as in the case of continual conflict in the classroom, the situation that occurs is not

very pleasant for either teachers or students.

Note that one difference between these studies and those presented earlier on student failure is that the latter group does not place the "blame" for the failure or miscommunication in either group, but rather sees the problem as lying in the interaction between the two. It is not the students' misconceptions of what they should be doing nor the teachers' miscalculations of what students can do that is the "cause" of the problems. Rather, it is the mix of the two, the interaction of various forces, that leads to problems in the classroom.

Several of the authors have gone beyond the description of the differences to suggest ways in which teachers can change their style of teaching to accomodate different learning and interactional styles brought to the classroom by students in order to effect what Erickson and Mohatt (1982) refer to as "culturally responsive pedagogy." (p. 167) (See also Cazden (forthcoming) for a discussion of similar issues.) In these cases, which include Heath (1982b), Au (1980) and Erickson and Mohatt (1982), the teacher or teachers who were having problems were aided by either the researchers or other teachers and administrators in finding a solution to the interactional dilemmas they were facing. The solutions included at least a heightened sensitivity to the child's ways of understanding and dealing with the world, and in some cases included some changes in classroom practices to accomodate some of these differences.

In all three studies discussed above, making teachers aware of possible ways of coping with these interactional problems seems to have made a difference in terms of both reducing the tension in the

classroom and improving what is generally referred to as the "climate" of the classroom, and also, at least in the case of the Kamehameha Early Education Project described by Au (1980), increasing reading levels and test scores on the part of the students. I would like, however, to raise two cautionary notes in this regard.

The first was articulated most succintly by Fenstermacher (1978) (see also Wilson, Gideonse, Johnston, and Shultz, 1981 and Shultz and Yinger, 1982) who argued that converting the findings of teacher effectiveness research into rules that could be used by teachers in order to bring about some change in their effectiveness may in fact be a misguided notion. He was specifically referring to process-produce research in which teacher behaviors were correlated (either positively or negatively) with student achievement (as measured on standardized tests). The results of some such efforts was to train teachers to increase their use of behaviors that were correlated positively with gains in student achievement and to try to extinguish those behaviors that were not correlated with increases. The problem with this view, according to Fenstermacher, is that it assumes a causal relationship between discrete teacher behaviors and student performance on standardized tests. Such a relationship might either not exist (that is, it might be a spurious correlation) or even if it does, there are many other factors that are also involved that need to be taken into account when trying to change the process of teaching.

Instead, Fenstermacher argues for a better understanding of teacher belief systems and that the emphasis of educational research should be on what teacher think as opposed to what they do. He argues

for the use of educational research to transform teachers' beliefs in order to provide them with the skills necessary to make sense of what is happening in their own classrooms.

Although he was not talking about ethnographic research, I think that his concern should be heeded by those who are trying to apply the results of any kind of research to the improvement of teaching. In saying this, I don't mean to imply that any of the studies mentioned earlier are guilty of the sort of simpleminded reasoning that Fenstermacher refers to. However, there is a danger inherent in trying to apply the findings of specific findings from ethnographic (and other sorts of research) studies related to stereotyping. That is, for example, that teachers reading about the results of Au's study might assume that all Hawaiian children participate in an out of school activity called "talk story" and as a result attempt to incorporate the elements of this into their teaching practices. Rather than serving as guides as to what should be done, it might be better to think of these studies as sources of information about what is potentially problematic and also as sources of potential solutions for problems. Each case needs to be examined individually. What worked in other situations may or may not work in another setting with other teachers and students.

The second cautionary note is related to the first and was initially raised by Cazden (1982). She argues, based on her own recent experiences as a classroom teacher and on the writing of Margaret Mead and Edward Sapir, that too much self consciousness about what teachers are doing may not be a good thing. Too much reflection and analysis may lead, in some cases, to increased self-doubt and paralysis.

However, she does see some circumstances in which self-awareness and analysis might be productive.

> In other words, where all is going well, we as researchers needn't tell all we know. When patterns of behavior need to be changed, then temporary self-consciousness may be the price. (Cazden, 1982, p. 222)

Once again, I should point out that all of the studies reported above discussed cases where there was potential miscommunication and interactional trouble. In those cases, heightened awareness might not only have been desirable, but necessary.

The final area I will include under studies of interaction in educational settings are those having to do with children's culture or what is sometimes referred to as the "hidden life of children." These are explorations into what it is that children do when left to their own devices and are not directly involved with adults. Included under this category are studies of children's folklore (Bauman, 1982), studies of the use of non-standard dialect by gang members (Labov, 1982), and studies of children's playground activities (Finnan, 1982 and Borman, 1979). Corsaro (1981) also provides a discussion of research strategies involved in "entering the child's world."

It would be easy to assume that if we knew more about the child's world, we could better teach them by incorporating their language, games, and coping strategies into the life of schools. Although this may be the case, a number of authors (including Cazden, 1982, Bauman, 1982, Sutton-Smith, 1982, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1982, and Smith, 1981a) raise some concerns about the implications of such an intrusion into the lives of children for the children themselves.

> By colonization of children's culture, I mean attempts to formalize informal education, to incorporate children's folklore into the curriculum. Although we can and should gain important insights into how children learn by examining their informal acquisition of skills through folklore, we should be cautious about intervening in this area, whether by incorporating their folklore into the curriculum or by intervening with their spontaneous involvement with folklore.
>
> (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1982, p. 256)

This conversion of what rightfully belongs to children into materials and practices for classroom use can devalue its usefulness and cause mistrust on the part of the children. The caution then resides in its application to classroom practice, not on the insights such study can yield into the skills and abilities of children. As Cazden (1982) points out, there is other folklore that can be used in the classroom and curriculum materials can be obtained from other sources. (p. 214)

Researcher-Teacher Collaboration

The final area that has become more prevalent over the past two years in the ethnography of schooling and learning literature has to do with the process of collaboration between researchers and teachers. Through this process, researchers and teachers have worked together in defining questions to pursue, actually carrying out the research together, and finally, finding potential solutions to problems of schooling through the research. Included in this area is work by Florio and Walsh, 1981, Wallat, Green, Marx, Conlin, and Haramis, 1981, and Smith, 1981a and 1981b.

Several of the articles mentioned earlier in the section on studies of home-school differences in patterns of interaction discussed the ways in which knowledge gained by researchers was used to

change existing classroom set-ups in order to create environments which were more culturally congruent with what the children experienced at home and in the community. It is my impression that in those settings (see in particular Erickson and Mohatt, 1982, Au, 1980 and Heath, 1982b) the research was initiated and carried out by an outside researcher who then reported the findings to the teachers and together they worked on solutions to the interactional problems. In the work being discussed in this section, the process is somewhat different in that teachers (and in some cases other practitioners such as principals) were not merely the subject of study, but were active participants in the research process from beginning to end.

> There are ethical, epistemological, and pragmatic reasons why it is worthwhile and important to adopt such a collegial ethnographic method of research in classrooms. This way of working treats the teacher and children not as the objects of study, but as active participants in the inquiry. The teacher's opinions are valued. She is seen as a vital member of the research team. In fact, her cooperation and insight are essential to the process of inquiry. The entire research operation becomes more congenial and the findings beneficial to all involved. Both parties go away having gained something of value.
>
> (Florio and Walsh, 1981, pp. 99-100)

The preceding paragraph was taken from an article written by Susan Florio, then a graduate student at the Harvard School of Education, and Martha Walsh, a teacher in the Newton, Massachusetts school system. They not only carried out a research project together, but also presented papers at national meetings and wrote articles together. (This was also true in the studies reported by Smith, 1981a and 1981b, and by Wallat, et al, 1981.) In this way, the teacher plays a significant role in not only being the local informant and "expert," but also by being a full-fledged participant in the research

process.

It seems apparent that the process of researcher-teacher collaboration is a productive one, reaping benefits for all the parties involved. Florio and Walsh (1981) speak of a "blending of roles" (p. 93), where the researcher took on more and more of the perspective of the teacher and the teacher was able to see things more from the perspective of the researcher. While the former was engaged in doing participant observation, the latter was becoming more of an "observant participant."

It seems clear then, that the goal of such collaboration is not merely to carry out a traditional research project, but also to attempt to achieve some symbiosis in thought and action. In this way, this type of collaboration can be seen as an intervention (in the clinical sense) in that the researcher is attempting to interfere with and change naturally occurring processes. This is accomplished not only through a change in his or her own understanding of what is happening, but also alterations are being made in the ways in which teachers observe and interpret the world around them.

Implications for Teacher Education

In the preceding sections of the paper, my goal was to provide an overview of the literature on the ethnography of schooling and learning that has appeared during the past two years. In so doing, I have reviewed representative articles dealing with each of the areas and have also tried to present some of the criticism and cautions that have been raised. In what follows, I will attempt to draw some conclusions regarding the role this type of research and literature can play in the education of teachers. Although my focus will

be on teachers, most, if not all, of what I say can also be applied to the training of other school personnel.

In spite of some of the warning and notes of caution I mentioned earlier, I believe that ethnography has a place in the education of teachers. Three aspects of the existing body of literature in anthropology and education bear directly on this point: 1) Ethnography is thought of not as a "method" but as a manifestation of a world view and a way of understanding and interpreting the world of others. 2) The focus of studies has shifted from examinations of failure to descriptions of what is happening in educational settings including homes, schools, and playgrounds. 3) One of the most promising results of ethnographic research has been the benefits, for both teachers and researchers, of the contact they have had with each other. This is true of the studies that were initiated and carried out by ethnographers and then reported to or interpreted with the help of teachers (cf. Au, 1980, Heath, 1982b,and Erickson and Mohatt, 1982), or collaborations between teachers and other practitioners with researchers (cf. Florio and Walsh, 1981, Wallat et al, 1981, and Smith, 1981a and 1981b).

In all of the cases of researcher-teacher collaboration, one or more researchers spent a great deal of time working, interacting, and being with teachers. If the results of these studies are to be taken literally, then one might argue that every teacher needs an ethnographer in his or her room in order to obtain the kinds of insights that have been reported in the literature. "An ethnographer in every room" can become our new slogan.

Before we get laughed out of the fields of educational research and practice, I think we have to realize the limitations of such a proposal both in terms of the money involved and the human energy and expenditure required. Given that this is not a useful approach to follow, what can educational anthropologists contribute to the education of teachers, both at an inservice and pre-service level?

In terms of teacher education, there has been a movement afoot over the past five years to change the emphasis from teaching methods to ways teachers conceive of their task and think about what is happening in their classroom. (Gideonse, 1982, Shultz and Yinger, 1982, and Fenstermacher, 1979) The essence of these concerns is to make teachers more analytical regarding what they are doing, more critical of what they are hearing and reading, and better able to figure out for themselves what is happening in their own classrooms, rather than relying on the insights of others. In another paper, Bob Yinger and I have articulated these concerns as follows:

> We advocate the skeptical consumption of research findings by teachers. In order to be able to translate research findings into practice for their own classrooms, teachers need to have analytical and inquiry skills that will allow them to read research reports and listen to inservice presentations, digest the information, and then apply what seems useful to them in their particular situations. In addition, teachers need these inquiry skills in order to find out what is actually happening in their own classrooms, regardless of what is said in the research literature or in inservice presentations.
>
> (Shultz and Yinger, 1982, p.1)

Not everyone will agree with these feelings and concerns regarding teacher education. When Yinger and I expressed these sentiments before a group of colleagues, there didn't seem to be overwhelming support for what we were saying. In fact, one colleague who did agree

said: "You're proposing to revolutionize the whole field of teacher education. Your proposal would produce teachers who think, rather than technicians who are hired to carry out the orders of others."

In spite of these sentiments, I felt that I had to state my own biases regarding what I think the focus of teacher education should be and what I would like teachers to be able to do once they were installed in their classrooms. To summarize, there are two areas where I believe teachers could use further training. The first includes skills in critical analysis that will allow them to interpret, critique, and digest what others are saying and writing: the second set of skills has to do with finding out for themselves what is happening in their own classrooms, including how to observe and analyze what they are seeing and doing.

It should be apparent that these areas do not fall under the domain of any one discipline, and that many disciplines, including psychology, sociology, history, folklore, and philosophy, as well as anthropology, can contribute to the educational process being proposed here. What then, does educational anthropology have to offer that is perhaps unique or different than the other disciplines? In what follows, I will present two ways in which I think it can help.

In order to be able to analyze and critique the works of others, and to obtain insights into classroom processes before they actually begin teaching, potential teachers need detailed accounts of what happens in schools and other educational settings. They need descriptions that are "thick" (to use Geertz's term) in describing the lives, actions, thoughts and perceptions of the persons involved in educational settings. This is one place where I think that educational anthropologists

can help, by producing such "thick" accounts of the lives of participants in school settings.

What makes these accounts different from much of the current literature on life in educational settings is that they would contain a great deal of description of what is happening in these settings, enough so that the reader can uncover "what one needs to know to understand another person's or group's social reality." (Sanday, 1982, p. 251) These descriptions should deal with some of the social demands placed on teachers, students and others in school settings, such as how to elicit information from students, or how a student can respond to questions in the classroom in a manner that is considered acceptable. And these descriptions can deal with "taught cognitive learning," that is, the ways in which teachers and students jointly create environments where learning can take place (or where it is hindered or obstructed). (See Erickson, 1982, for more detail on this topic.) Or better yet, we can provide thick descriptions of both social and cognitive learning and tasks in a variety of different classrooms.

In reflecting on what types of writing are most appropriate in this regard, I have tried to think of examples of articles or books that best illustrate what I'm proposing. Erickson (1982), in presenting a similar argument, uses Annie Sullivan's accounts of Helen Keller's learning that words were actually the names for things. I was not as successful in my own search and rather than presenting examples, I would like to list some of the features such accounts of schooling and learning would have to include.

These accounts would be stories of the everyday life of participants in learning situations, both in and out of school. They would be written in everyday language, avoiding the jargon that many researchers are fond of using in reporting the results of their research. Writing such stories will require skills usually associated with the writing of fiction as opposed to technical or "scientific" writing. Although such accounts might not receive much currency in academic circles, they could provide raw material for reflection, analysis, and thinking on the part of educational practitioners.

In addition, these stories should be rich in the commonplace details of everyday life, leaving out as little as possible regarding the actions, thoughts, perceptions and feelings of the actors. They should leave the reader with the impression of having been there, of having known the participants and of having understood what they were doing or trying to do.

These accounts of life in classrooms could be supplemented by videotapes of teachers and students interacting with each other. Presentation of this type of material in written form is problematic and it is very possible that the additional information provided visually and auditorally through the use of audio-visual recordings could greatly enhance the value of ethnographic accounts of everyday life in educational settings.[2]

Spindler presents a similar argument for using not only accounts of life in different settings but the actual materials of ethnographic research - field notes, photographs, interviews - in the training of professional anthropologists.

> In our efforts to disseminate the results of anthro-ethnography we should not overlook the teaching channel. In some ways the classroom or seminar is the most salubrious setting for the transmission and diffusion of ethnographic case study material and the lessons to be learned from it. The classroom is more flexible and less permanent than the printed page.
> (Spindler, 1982, p. 27)

These accounts are not meant to produce stereotypes in the minds of teachers and potential teachers regarding what happens in classrooms, but rather, they are meant to serve to stimulate educational practitioners to think about, analyze, critique, and synthesize what happens in classrooms and to understand the social, political and psychological implications of such practices. It would not be expected that teachers would then take the results of such studies and apply them simplemindedly to their own settings, but would rather use them as food for thought in their deliberations.

I believe that these "thick" accounts of what happens in educational settings can be more useful in this process than reports that summarize in statistical tables, charts, and graphs the results of studies conducted in many classrooms, across many teachers, students and schools. These types of studies have a use of their own in summarizing potential trends and concerns across situations. However, for someone wanting to know what happens, what is going on, in those settings, they are not very helpful. This same criticism can be applied to many of the reports of ethnographic studies of life in classrooms and other educational settings. While they approach more closely the types of accounts that I am referring to, they too use professional jargon and styles of presentation that are aimed at "scientific" audiences. On the other hand, most of these reports, either ethnographic or non-ethnographic, were not written for the purpose I am proposing

here. They were meant to be disseminated primarily in professional circles, and were not intended for consumption by non-academics who are unfamiliar with many of the terms and concepts used.

In summary, these ethnographic descriptions of life in classrooms can be used as case material for discussions in teacher education courses regarding the everyday life of classrooms and other educational settings. By getting students to analyze, critique and interpret what they get from these materials, I believe they will be able to think in more differentiated ways about what is happening and what potentially could be happening in educational settings.

The second area where I believe educational anthropologists have something to contribute is in providing teachers and potential teachers with a different way of looking at and understanding their own classrooms and other educational settings. In this way, we can contribute to the strenghthening of inquiry skills that hopefully will help teachers gain a deeper understanding of what they are doing.

As I said earlier in the paper, ethnography is more than a method. It is a way of approaching the world, of understanding and interpreting what we are seeing. In particular, by attempting to understand the world from the point of view of others, we gain an appreciation for multiple interpretations of the same reality and in fact, of multiple realities, rather than being blinded by or forced to live by only one.

The accounts of collaboration between teachers and researchers mentioned earlier were all attempts to train teachers, if not as ethnographers, as better observers (or as "observant participants," to

use Florio and Walsh's term). I have tried to do this myself, through an intensive two-week workshop that Bob Yinger and I held for teachers of two schools in the Cincinnati area. (For a detailed description of the workshop, see Shultz and Yinger, 1982.)

The purpose of the workshop was to provide teachers with instruction in the use of three skills: journal keeping, observation, and collaborative problem solving. The journal keeping skills were intended to help the teachers write about and reflect on what they themselves were doing. The observational skills were used to help teachers learn something from observing others, whether teachers, students, administrators or parents. Finally, the problem solving skills were presented as a way of providing teachers with skills in working with other teachers and administrators in order to come up with potential solutions to problems they were encountering in their particular work setting.

My responsibility in the workshop was to provide the training in observational skills. In three six-hour days of presentation, I had the teachers do live observations and I showed videotapes of teachers and students interacting in classrooms. Throughout, my goal was to get the teachers to examine their own biases in what they observed. The thing that proved to be most effective was getting them to view a testing situation through the eyes of the five-year old child being tested.

When we did a follow-up evaluation of the workshop approximately two months after it occurred, the results were fairly consistent among teachers. Most of them did not have the time, energy or motivation to write in their journals. Nor did most of them have enough time in

the day to meet with other teachers and talk about problems and attempt to come up with solutions. However, there seemed to be general agreement that the observational skills they learned were useful and a number of them commented on how they now deferred making judgments about children until they had gathered enough information in order to make a more accurate assessment of what the child could and could not do. (Shultz and Yinger, 1982, p. 13) They were also saying (maybe not in so many words) that they were trying to understand what was happening from the child's perspective, rather than assuming that there was only one way of interpreting any given situation.

One other case bears mentioning at this point. While working with Fred Erickson, Susan Florio, Don Dorr-Bremme and myself during a two year project, a teacher once jokingly (?) said to us: (my paraphrase) "You guys ruined my life. I used to get in my car at the end of the school day and would block out everything about school until I walked in at 7:30 the next morning to set up for the coming day. Now I get in my car and I say to myself: 'Why did Johnny do that (or say that)?' I then spend some time thinking about it and trying to understand what he meant or was trying to do." She then went on to say that she would attempt to understand what was happening from the child's perspective and she would test these hunches (or hypotheses) either the next day or sometime in the future when a similar situation arose.

In this short description, the teacher is raising two very important issues. The first is that she is using the skills in observation and interpretation in order to make sense of situations that she doesn't

understand. That is, she is using the skills at times when things are going wrong. Bearing in mind Cazden's (1982) cautions mentioned earlier, these are exactly the times when such skills can be most useful.

Second, she was only half joking when she said that we had "ruined her life." What I think she meant by that is that the skills we had taught her had created more work for her. On the one hand, she was able to gain a more differentiated understanding of what was happening in her classroom. On the other hand, she was taking her "work" home and so she spent more time and energy on it than she had before. This point is related to the one I mentioned earlier about reconceptualizing teacher education. She was now thinking of her job as more than a mechanical task she performed day in and day out, as she had for seven years prior to her involvement in the study. She was now more actively involved in observing, analyzing and interpreting what was going on around her.

Both cases mentioned above involved experienced teachers. The teachers in the workshop had from one to over twenty years of teaching experience and the teacher in the second case had approximately seven years in the field. It is possible that such techniques work best in in-service situations in which the people we are working with know what that world is like and have some experience of their own to bounce these ideas off of. I have never tried this approach in a pre-service situation.

In spite of that, I don't think we should write this off as something that will not work with inexperienced professionals. Potential teachers in the state of Ohio are required to spend one quarter during

each of their freshman and sophomore years observing in schools as part of their undergraduate education. This is in addition to the more traditional time spent during the junior and senior years doing student teaching and observation in school settings. What this says is that, at least in Ohio although I assume it is not all that different in other states, there is built in to the teacher education curriculum a perfect opportunity to engage in observational experiences where students can learn different ways of seeing and knowing. If this is combined with classroom discussion of written accounts of schooling and learning of the type described earlier, I believe students would receive a better understanding of educational and learning processes as well as skills in analysis, interpretation and observation that will be very useful to them in their professional lives.

What I presented here are not earth-shattering ideas, and, in many cases, have all been proposed before. I do believe that educational anthropology has something to contribute to the process of teacher education. In many cases, implementing the recommendations made above will require some political maneuvering, since many anthropologists who work in colleges of education are not directly involved in teacher training at the pre-service level. I would urge educational anthropologists to continue to work with teachers, to continue to include among their tasks not only doing research on basic issues, but also discovering ways of implementing findings and helping others find these things out for themselves. If this endeavor should prove to be totally successful, then the emphasis of anthropologists working in colleges of education could be on educating others, leaving the data gathering and analysis to those who need them the most: the teachers,

administrators, counselors, and other school professionals who in their everyday experiences live with the problems and dilemmas we have been trying to understand.

Endnotes

I would like to thank many of my colleagues and students for their input in discussions we have held related to many of the topics raised in this paper. Robert Yinger and Roberta Truax will recognize many of the issues we have discussed over the last few months. In particular, I am especially indebted to Janet Theophano for reading an earlier draft and making significant comments, both substantive and stylistic, which I have incorporated in the paper. Without her help and support, this project would have been greatly impoverished.

1. The distinction between the social domain and the cognitive one is arbitrary since social tasks require cognition and cognitive activities are embedded in social action. The two are therefore inseparable in real life. The reason I talk about them separately is that the studies I am discussing focus on one or the other and only rarely on both.

2. I would like to thank my colleague, Roberta Truax, for reminding me of the value of audio-visual material as a teaching tool.

References Cited

Au, Kathryn H.

1980 "Participation Structures in a Reading Lesson with Hawaiian Children: Analysis of a Culturally Appropriate Instructional Event." Anthropology and Education Quarterly (2): 91-115.

Bauman, Richard.

1982 "Ethnography of Children's Folklore." In P. Gilmore and A.A. Glatthorn eds. Children in and Out of School. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Besag, Frank, ed.

1981 The Generator. 12(2).

Borman, Kathryn.

1979 "Children's Interactions on Playgrounds." Theory Into Practice 18(4): 251:257.

Cazden, Courtney.

1982 "Four Comments." In P. Gilmore and A.A. Glatthorn, eds. Children In and Out of School. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Cazden, Courtney.

Forthcoming. "Can Ethnographic Research Go Beyond the Status Quo?" Anthropology and Education Quarterly.

Corsaro, William A.

1981 "Entering the Child's World: Research Strategies for Field Entry and Data Collection in a Preschool Setting." In J. Green and C. Wallat, eds. Ethnography and Language in Educational Settings. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing.

Cremin, Lawrence A.

1978 "The Education of the Educating Professions." In The Knowledge Base for the Preparation of Education Personnel, Yearbook 1978, Volume 1, Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education.

Erickson, Frederick,

1973 "What Makes School Ethnography Ethnographic?" Council on Anthropology and Education Newsletter, 2: 10-19.

Erickson, Frederick.

1982 "Taught Cognitive Learning in its Immediate Environments: A Neglected Topic in the Anthropology of Education." Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 13(2): 149-180.

Erickson, Frederick and Gerald Mohatt.

1982 "Cultural Organization of Participation Structures in Two Classrooms of Indian Students." In G. Spindler, ed. Doing the Ethnography of Schooling. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Fenstermacher, Gary D.

1979 "A Philosophical Consideration of Recent Research on Teacher Effectiveness." In L.S. Shulman, ed. Review of Research in Education, 6, 1978. Itasca, Illinois: F.E. Peacock Publishers.

Finnan, Christine, R.

1982 "The Ethnography of Children's Spontaneous Play." In G. Spindler, ed. Doing the Ethnography of Schooling. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Florio, Susan.

1978 Learning How to Go to School: An Ethnography of Interaction in a Kindergarten/First Grade Classroom. Unpublished dissertation, Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Florio, Susan and Martha Walsh.

1981 "The Teacher as Colleague in Classroom Research." In H.T. Trueba, G.P. Guthrie, and K.H. Au, eds. Culture and the Bilingual Classroom: Studies in Classroom Ethnography. Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House Publishers.

Geertz, Clifford.

1973 The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books.

Gideonse, Hendrik D.

1982 "The Necessary Revolution in Teacher Education." Unpublished paper. College of Education, University of Cincinnati.

Gilmore, Perry and A.A. Glatthorn, eds.

1982 Children In and Out of School: Ethnography and Education. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Gilmore, Perry and D.M. Smith.

1982 "A Retrospective Discussion of the State of the Art in Ethnography in Education." In P. Gilmore and A.A. Glatthorn, eds. Children In and Out of School. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Green, Judith.

1983 "Research on Teaching as a Linguistic Process: A State of the Art." In E.W. Gordon, ed. Review of Research in Education, 10, 1983. Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association.

Green, Judith and Cynthia Wallat, eds.

1981a Ethnography and Language in Educational Settings. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing.

Green, Judith and Cynthia Wallat.

1981b "Mapping Instructional Conversations: A Sociolinguistic Ethnography." In J.Green and C. Wallat (eds.) Ethnography and Language in Educational Settings. Norwood, N.J., Ablex Publishing.

Hanna, Judith L.

1982 "Public Social Policy and the Children's World:Implications of Ethnographic Research for Desegregated Schooling." In G. Spindler, ed. Doing the Ethnography of Schooling. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Hart, Sylvia.

1982 "Analyzing the Social Organization for Reading in One Elementary School." In G. Spindler, ed. Doing the Ethnography of Schooling. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Heath, Shirley B.

1982a "Ethnography in Education: Defining the Essentials." In P. Gilmore and A.A.Glatthorn , eds. Children In and Out of School. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Heath, Shirley, B.

1982b "Questioning at Home and at School: A Comparative Study." In G. Spindler, ed. Doing the Ethnography of Schooling. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Heath, Shirley B.

1982c "What No Bedtime Story Means: Narrative Skills at Home and at School." Language in Society 11(1): 49-76.

Hymes, Dell.

1982 "What is Ethnography?" In P. Gilmore and A.A. Glatthorn eds. Children In and Out of School. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Jacob, Evelyn.

1982 "Combining Ethnographic and Qualitative Approaches: Suggestions and Examples from a Study on Puerto Rico." In P. Gilmore and A.A. Glatthorn, eds. Children In and Out of School. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara.

1982 "Contributions and Caveats." In P. Gilmore and A.A. Glatthorn, eds. Children In and Out of Schools. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition.

1982 "A Model System for the Study of Learning Difficulties." The Quarterly Newsletter of the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition 4(3).

Labov, William.

1982 "Competing Value Systems in Inner-City Schools." In P. Gilmore and A.A. Glatthorn, eds. Children In and Out of School. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

McDermott, Ray P. and Lois Hood.

1982 "Institutionalized Psychology and the Ethnography of Schooling." In P. Gilmore and A.A. Glatthorn, eds. Children In and Out of School. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Mehan, Hugh.

1982 "The Structure of Classroom Events and Their Consequences for Student Performance." In P. Gilmore and A.A. Glatthorn, eds. Children In and Out of School. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Michaels, Sara.

1981 "'Sharing Time': Children's Narrative Styles and Differential Access to Literacy." Language in Society. 10: 423-442.

Rist, Ray C.

1980 "Blietzkreig Ethnography: On the Transformation of a Method into a Movement." Educational Researcher. 9(2): 8-10.

Sanday, Peggy R.

1982 "Anthropologists in Schools: School Ethnography and Ethnology." In P. Gilmore and A A. Glatthorn, eds. Children In and Out of Schools. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Shultz, Jeffrey, Susan Florio and Frederick Erickson.

1982 "Where's the Floor?: Aspects of the Culbural Organization of Social Relationships in Communication at Home and at School." In P. Gilmore and A.A. Glatthorn, eds. Children In and Out of School. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Shultz, Jeffrey and Robert J. Yinger.

1982 "Developing Inquiry Skills in Teachers: Some Reflections on Improvement of Practice." Unpublished paper, College of Education, University of Cincinnati.

Smith, B.O.

1980 A Design for a School of Pedagogy. Publication No. E-80-42000, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Smith, David M.

1981a "Ethnographic Monitoring of Children's Acquisition of Reading/Language Arts Skills In and Out of the Classroom: General Findings." The Generator. 12(2): 37-68.

Smith, David M.

1981b "Ethnographic Monitoring: A Way of Understanding by Those Who are Making Schooling Work." The Generator. 12(2): 69-92.

Spindler, George, ed.

1982 Doing the Ethnography of Schooling: Educational Anthropology in Action. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Sutton-Smith, Brian.

1982 "Play Theory of the Rich and for the Poor." In P. Gilmore and A.A. Glatthorn, eds. Children In and Out of School. Washington, D.C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Wallat, Cynthia, Judith Green, Susan Marx Conlin, and Marjean Haramis.

1981 "Issues Related to Action Research in the Classroom: The Teacher and Researcher as a Team." In J. Green and C. Wallat eds. Ethnography and Language in Educational Settings. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing.

Wilcox, Kathleen.

1982a "Differential Socialization in the Classroom: Implications for Equal Opportunity." In G Spindler, ed. Doing the Ethnography of Schooling. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Wilcox, Kathleen.

1982b "Ethnography as a Methodology and Its Applications to the Study of Schooling: A Review." In G. Spindler (ed.) Doing the Ethnography of Schooling. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Wilson, F. Robert, Hendrik Gideonse, J. Howard Johnston, and Jeffrey Shultz.

1981 "How Startling are the Coker, Medley, and Soar Findings?: A Critique." Phi Delta Kappan 62 (10): 736-738.

Wolcott, Harry, ed.

1982 Special Issue: Anthropology of Learning. Anthropology and Education Quarterly, XIII(2), Summer, 1982.